Smuggling of antiques and statues

†4317. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that smuggling of antiques and statues is taking place continuously;

(b) whether it is also a fact that antiques and statues are being exported to foreign countries through smuggling;

(c) whether it is also a fact that ASI is not committed towards the presentation and storage of antiques of the country and it is indifferent also towards the same; and

(d) the action being taken by Government to check this loot and smuggling of antiques of the country?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The availble data does not indicate continuous smuggling and illegal export of antiquities to foreign countries.

(c) and (d) The Archaeological Survey of India is fully committed towards the conservation and safety of the antiquities at the protected monuments as well as the site museums. To ensure their safety, the Archaeological Survey of India engages security guards whose strength has been augmented by deploying private security guards, State police and home guards personnel and also the CISF at selected monuments.

Provisions exist under the antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 for regulation of export in antiquities and art treasures and for prevention of their illicit trafficking such as registration of dealers, registration of specified categories of antiquities, prosecution of offenders etc. The Government is also amending the provisions of the Act to provide additional safety guards against illegal trafficking in antiquities.

Filing of Income Tax

4318. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many persons of Ward No. 40(3) of Parliament House, have filed Income Tax returns for the years 2004-05 and 2005-06;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) how many persons of the ward have filed Income Tax cases for refund and how many have been refunded during these years; and

(c) whether it is a fact that lot of cases are pending with the Income Tax Office for refund and by when the amount would be refunded and reasons for delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) The number of persons who have filed Income Tax returns in Ward No. 40(3) of Parliament House is not available as records are not maintained organization-wise/employer-wise.

(b) During the years 2004-05 and 2005-06, 2319 and 2346 returns bearing refund respectively were received and refunds in 2491 and 2885 cases respectively were issued including brought forward cases.

(c) No refunds are pending for the financial years 2004-05 and 2005-06 as refunds have been issued in the prescribed time.

Sale of shares by UTI

4319. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 1558 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 13th March, 2007 and state:

(a) whether UTI had sold a large number of shares of several companies including Oswal Agro Mills on the basis of an advertisement placed in National Dailies on 6th September, 2005;

(b) if so, the details of the shares sold, company-wise and price-wise;

(c) whether LIC is going to undertake a similar exercise expeditiously;

(d) whether the investment committee of LIC has made any recommendation with respect to Oswal Agro Mills Ltd.;

(e) if so, details of the recommendations;

(f) by when it is likely to be implemented; and

(g) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) The Specified Undertaking of Unit Trust of India (SUUTI) has sold shares of seven closed and sick companies to various buyers on the basis of an advertisement placed in